BUCS 2026 Report

On **Friday 13th February**, 13 competitors from CUKC travelled to Sheffield to spend their Valentine's weekend competing at BUCS. With over 700 entries this year (the most it's ever been!), it was a huge competition and promised an exciting weekend of karate!

Day 1: Kata and Team Kumite

Fuelled by a late-night Domino's/doner kebab, the team arrived bright and early at Ponds Forge International Sports Centre, raring to go for the first day of competition.

Kicking the day off for CUKC were Lukas, Nirmay and Alex L in **Men's Senior Kata**. Lukas delivered a strong performance of Enpi but lost to a competitor who later reached the top eight. Nirmay performed Gankaku and narrowly lost 3-2 to an eventual semi-finalist. Alex followed with Jion, unfortunately losing against our old Oxf*rd frenemy (who would go on to win bronze).

In **Women's Senior Kata**, Talin opened with a strong Kanku Dai but unfortunately lost. Angela faced a familiar opponent from the Birmingham Open, performing Gojushiho Sho against Sanseiru but was also bested. Taaliya followed with Jion and managed to secure one flag despite losing the match (taking the small wins where we can!)

Charley wrapped up the kata events in **Women's Novice Kata** with a solid Heian Godan but was also beaten by her opponent.

It was a really tough day for kata with difficult draws, meaning no CUKC competitors progressed beyond the first round. Nevertheless, everyone left the mats with their chins up and excited for the kumite events.

The **Men's Team Kumite** squad, Nirmay, Dani, Will and Pavlo, faced St Andrews in the first round. Nirmay opened with an outstanding performance, scoring a chudan mawashi geri, a jodan ura mawashi geri and two gyaku-zukis to win 7-0!! Dani's bout ended in a draw, and although Will fought well, he lost after an ippon from his opponent. With St Andrews only fielding three competitors, Cambridge took the overall win!

In round two we faced the University of Birmingham, last year's silver medallists. Nirmay drew his match after a close fight. Unfortunately, Dani and Will both lost their matches against tough opponents, ending the team's run. But a valiant effort from our team!

After a long wait, it was time for **Women's Team Kumite**. Angela, Nuha and Hannah first faced Edinburgh, losing both opening fights. However, Edinburgh reached the final, giving Cambridge another chance through repechage.

Against UCL, Hannah narrowly lost their match, but Nuha secured a 2-1 victory with two strong chudan gyaku-zukis. Cambridge's second win of the day! To add to this, Angela then won the deciding match 2-0 with two well-timed jodan kizami-zukis, sending Cambridge into the bronze medal match!

In the bronze medal fight against Birmingham, Hannah drew their match and Nuha was paired with Birmingham's best fighter, unfortunately losing 8-0. Angela won her match on senshu after a 1-1 tie. With one win each, ultimately Birmingham took the overall win on total points. But an incredible run from our women's team nevertheless!

After an exciting first day, the team headed to a local food court before returning to the Airbnb to rewatch the day's performances on the big screen. Talk about dedication!

Day 2: Individual Kumite

After a good night's rest, CUKC returned to Ponds Forge on Sunday for the **individual kumite** events.

Dani opened the day, taking a decisive win in his first match on judges' decision after a 0-0 draw, but losing his second bout 4–1. Pavlo followed in the Men's Novice category, fighting well but unfortunately losing.

CUKC's first medal came from Charley in the Women's Novice category. After progressing through a tight judges' decision 3-2 and advancing through repechage, she secured a bronze medal! A fantastic achievement!

In the Women's Senior -61 kg category, Nuha fought strongly but lost to a Nottingham Uni opponent. Jasmine, a new addition to the CUKC team and member of the England National Team, impressed by battling through 3 rounds and reaching the final without conceding a single point! In a close final on the centre mat, she narrowly missed out on gold with a final score of 1-0, taking home a silver medal. Well done Jasmine!

Will, Angela, Hannah, Taaliya, Nirmay and Alex L all faced tough draws, many against eventual medallists. Despite strong efforts, none progressed further in their categories.

This year's BUCS saw one of CUKC's biggest squads in recent years and for many, was their first BUCS/large-scale karate competition! It was fantastic to see everyone giving it their all on the mats and it was certainly a rewarding weekend with some great performances and two well-earned medals to show for it! The captains are incredibly proud of everyone! Huge thank you to Talin, Taaliya and Alex L for driving, shout out to Alex V for her amazing support, and of course thank you to Sensei Ken for all his invaluable coaching and encouragement!

Report by Angela Shang
Women's Captain 2025/26